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SURVEY OF SOME COMMUNIST TACTICS
AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

- A. Tactics Preceding International Conferences
- B. Tactics Within the Conference Halls
- C. Tactics Outside the Conference Halls

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The Communist delegates and delegation staff are very well selected and are fully adequate for conference purposes.

Example. About one third of the Chicom delegation to the Geneva Conference was made up of security personnel. A substantial number of this group could speak German, a lesser number could speak French.

B. Tactics Within the Conference Halls

Once the Communist conference plan is set, any change in the negotiations has to be referred back to headquarters, unless the highest-ranking Communists are present at the conference. When new directions arrive, they have to be obeyed to the letter. The Communist line is likely to begin as a hard, rigid position and gradually soften up as it develops a more conciliatory tone. Each point, however, regardless of how insignificant it may be, must be thrashed out in detail, apparently to provide the Communist delegate with proof that he has really "beat his head against a stone wall," before it is conceded.

Examples. The 1944 negotiations in London for the establishment of an emergency European Inland Transport Organization, which involved nothing detrimental to Soviet interests, dragged along until the Potsdam Conference in 1945, when Stalin personally approved the Soviet participation.

At the London Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers in September 1945, the phrase "in the main" was contained in brief instructions. Weeks of daily argument on this phrase took place in successive conferences concerning the Yugoslav-Italian boundary. Eventually, the negotiators were forced to suspend their meetings without agreement on the terms of reference. Only then, did the Soviet Government permit its delegation to approve the inclusion of the controversial phrase.

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In the absence of new instructions, Communist delegates reiterate their original positions even when confronted with new points of view on the part of other members of the conference. At times, reiteration constitutes a refuge for the Communist delegate when he is unable to answer the opposition or desires to stall for time.

Example. At the Berlin Conference, after the Western delegates had agreed to the almost impossible terms which the Soviets demanded for an Austrian peace treaty, Molotov, taken by surprise, could only fall back on reiterating familiar Communist arguments, since he had no expectation or intention of coming to an agreement over the treaty.

The various Communist delegations participating in a conference operate jointly in accordance with a prearranged and well-understood plan.

Examples. At Geneva, the various delegations made a series of speeches evidently planned ahead as to exact sequence. They likewise exhibited fairly ostentatious respect for each other in matters of decorum and protocol.

At various ECAFE conferences, it has been the practice for various Communist delegates to propound their presumably separate views, to be followed at the end by "generous support" from the Soviet Big Brother.

From the Communist point of view, international conferences constitute sounding boards for propaganda themes to be played throughout the world. They exploit such opportunities to the fullest.

Example. US speeches at the plenary sessions of the Geneva Conference were drowned by well-planned repetition of Communist themes by the Soviets, the Chinese, the North Koreans, and the Viet Minh, speaking in turn.

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Communist delegates delay ad infinitum agreement on procedural matters in order to avoid including in (or excluding from) the agenda matters of strong importance to the Communist cause. Also, they attempt to gain acceptance of an agenda which is, in effect, 'a statement of their solutions to the various items.

Examples. An indication of Soviet dependence on the technique of delaying an agreement on the agenda was the surprise that was engendered at the Berlin Conference, when Secretary Dulles immediately accepted the Soviet agenda and thus eliminated the necessity for a procedural debate which had characterized all previous conferences.

During the Korean peace talks, the Communists submitted the following item for inclusion in the agenda, which item, if accepted, would have obviated the need for substantive discussion: "To establish the 38th parallel as a military demarcation line, the armed forces of both sides to withdraw 10 kilometers from the 38th parallel and simultaneously complete the withdrawal from Korea within a definite time limit, leaving the evacuated areas demilitarized, and the civil authority would be restored by 25 June 1950."

The opposition frequently attempts to introduce irrelevant material in the conference. It insists on attempting to include matters extraneous to what the other delegations consider to be the agenda. This is done usually for political reasons or for the effect on the world opinion.

Examples. The Soviets repeatedly attempted to have the Chinese Communists included in the Berlin Conference, the agenda of which dealt with German and Austrian problems only. The Soviets argued that Chinese Communist participation would help world peace. Actually, a dozen Chicoms were present at the Conference as observers.

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At the Geneva Conference, there was a consistent Communist attempt to force the consideration of political matters prior to the military matters on the agenda. The Communists also insisted on discussing Laos and Cambodia, although Vietnam was the only subject of discussion.

Communist delegates frequently accuse other conference members of crimes with which they themselves are about to be confronted. They make a special attempt to bring up their own grievances, real or imaginary, before any other delegation has an opportunity to do so, in order to gain the edge on publicity.

Example. At the Potsdam Conference, the Soviets made bitter and prolonged attacks on the presence of British troops in Greece, the Dodecanese, Syria and Lebanon. After the Westerners had been worn down by these wrangles, the Soviets could more easily face the Western protests against brutal Soviet tactics in the Satellites. The Soviets thus encouraged their supporters in Greece, upheld their reputation for hostility to colonialism in the Middle East, and weakened any coordinated Western effort to loosen the Soviet grip on the Satellites.

The Communists frequently attempt to influence negotiations by conducting military activities concurrently with the conference.

Example. The assault on Dienbienphu was engineered on the eve of the Geneva Conference. Later, the Chicoms blandly undertook delaying tactics at the very time when Bidault was attempting to arrange a battlefield truce for the Dienbienphu wounded.

Communist delegates can be expected, particularly when an impasse at the conference is reached, to make separate appeals to various conference delegations, playing upon their special interests, hopes, or fears. One aim of this tactic is to divide the opposition.

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Examples. At the Berlin Conference, the Soviets and the Chi-coms held out attractive trade possibilities to the British and prospects for an easy Indochina settlement to the French, for the purpose of gaining agreement for the proposed Geneva Conference.

During the Geneva Conference, as the position of the French in Indochina grew progressively worse, the Viet Minh delegates made a separate approach to Mendes France knowing that he was hard pressed by French opinion.

Soviet Bloc delegates also play upon personality traits of other conference members when they have sufficient knowledge to slant their approach. They exploit their knowledge of opposition personalities to the fullest.

Example. At the London conferences of the Council of Foreign Ministers in 1945, Molotov tried with great pertinacity to trip up Secretary Byrnes when the latter indulged in his proclivity for off-the-cuff remarks. He baited England's Bevin by making him angry, and then taking advantage of Bevin's trait of being apologetic for his anger. Molotov also used petty tactics to slight Bidault's pride, at a time when the French felt sensitive, by neglecting to inform him of schedule changes which he had arranged with the other conferees.

Premier Chou En-lai, particularly, has been described as an extraordinarily harsh bargainer. Master of repetitive argument, he possesses infinite patience. At the conference table, he is crafty, deft, and quick to spot holes in his opponents' arguments. He is also described as a very good actor.

C. Tactics Outside the Conference Halls

The Communist delegations exhibit mutual solidarity. There is little or no mingling with foreign groups beyond official intercourse.

Example. At the Geneva Conference, the Communist delegations stayed close together. In the halls, they marched

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together in the approximate order of rank. Outside the halls, they nearly never appeared singly but stayed in groups of four or five.

The delegations include a sizeable number of guards and the leaders are always under the protection of their security men.

Example. At Geneva, Communist delegates were extremely security conscious. They employed body guards who, at appropriate times, surrounded the delegates in an established pattern of movement, resembling blocking in football. Of the 300 Chicom delegates, about a third were security men. As far as the maintenance of control over individuals was concerned, the Chicoms were the most security-conscious of all Communist delegations.

The relations between Communist delegations and the press are marked by cordiality to selected press and news outlets only. Press and other propaganda channels are well arranged in advance of the conference. During conferences, Communist delegations entertain leftist and neutral press and supply them with special releases.

Examples. At the armistice talks in Panmunjon, Communist press outlets were organic elements of the delegations. This arrangement enabled the Communists to manipulate the necessary publicity, so that press statements often appeared simultaneously with the actual occurrence of an event. Proceedings at closed sessions were at times leaked by the press outlets of the Communist delegations.

Soon after the start of the Geneva Conference, the Chicom delegation held a cocktail party for neutral and Communist press representatives. This was followed by various small dinners and table presentations. Chicom information officers handed out large quantities of free propaganda material designed to enhance the prestige of new China.

Communist propaganda activities extend to other participating delegations, as well as the press.

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Example. At the Geneva Conference, the Chicom delegation presented to the chiefs of other delegations handsomely bound collections of Chinese art. Other delegates were sent copies of a somewhat less fancy brochure with flattering photographs of Communist China ~~emphasizing~~ cultural achievements and economic and industrial activities.

Chinese Communist delegates exhibit unusual pride and arrogance at international conferences, particularly when their delegation chief delivers an address. Soviet representatives usually remain in the background, allowing the spotlight to fall on their puppet protagonists, but there are strong indications that the delegations of the Asian Satellites take their instructions not from Communist China, but from the Soviets.

Example. At the Geneva Conference, the Chicom showed a desire to "be equal" to the Russians. They made bigger demands on the Swiss for hotel rooms, once they determined the number requested by the Russians. Also, when they discovered that the Russians brought some of their food from the USSR, they had their own food transported from China. There was no doubt, however, that Molotov was the real master. His headquarters were visited by the Viet Minh and North Korean delegates much more often than Chou's. Molotov apparently passed instructions to these delegations directly, rather than through Chou. Korean speeches bore evidence of having been originally written in Russian.

The participation of Communist delegations at international conferences is usually accompanied by "side shows," such as demonstrations, parades and mass meetings, conducted by Communist front organizations. The embassies of the Communist countries represented are likely to remain in the background. The degree of activities by local leftist organizations usually indicates the extent of their penetration by Communist parties.

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Example. The actions of the Indonesian Ministry of Education during the Afro-Asian Conference will likely reveal the degree to which it is penetrated by the Communists.

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